

DNREC announces that first phase of new Tri-Valley Trail in White Clay Creek State Park to open to the public July 4

NEWARK – The much-anticipated Tri-Valley Trail, located in White Clay Creek State Park north of Newark, will open to the public on July 4, DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation announced today. The first 1.9-mile Phase I section connects Paper Mill and Thompson Station roads to a new trailhead at the intersection of Smith Mill and Paper Mill roads.

In addition, a 1.3- mile accessible stone surface trail has been constructed in tandem with the paved trail, for a total of 3.2 miles of newly-accessible trail added to the system of trails in the area.

The new trail provides White Clay Creek State Park users and commuters with a safe, accessible recreational experience through the northeastern portion of the park. More than three miles of existing trail provide users multiple trail connections within the park.

"Trails benefit all of us, in terms of health, the environment, economics, jobs and tourism," said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. "This new trail expands the overall area trail system which is good for recreational users and commuters alike. But most importantly, the new trail expands the all-weather accessible trail network within the park and creates accessible links to local communities and businesses. It also provides varied accessible trail experiences not found in the local area."

Planning for the new trail began under former Governor Jack Markell's First State Trails and Pathways Initiative. Eighty percent of the funding for the project came from the Recreation Trails Program, a grant program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. Work began in January 2017.

This fall, a state-of-the-art restroom facility will be constructed at the trailhead at Paper Mill and Smith Mill roads, adjacent to a new parking lot. Phase 2 will link the existing trail system to the popular Paper Mill Park and adjacent residential area. Construction dates for Phase 2 are yet to be determined. Once the trail system is completed, it will link the Pike Creek area and the city of Newark.

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